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were, therefore, properly pensioned by a place upon the retired list. To-day their name is largely a misnomer. Under the law, one is assignable to the teaching of ethics and English studies, one of Spanish and one of drawing. In fact, only one teaches mathematics at the Naval Academy; several of them are on duty at the Naval Observatory; two are librarians; one is engaged in ordinance work, and another in the bureau of yards and docks. They have no service at sea, and there is no more reason why hereafter the retired list should be open to a new appointee to the work now done by this corps than to any other employee in civil life. If this recommendation is adopted by Congress it will be necessary to provide for the appointment of astronomers at the Naval Observatory, to take the places, as they shall become vacant, of existing professors of mathematics who now serve in that capacity. There should be five astronomers, as at present, and the salary of those hereafter appointed should be sufficient to make up for the refusal to them of the privilege of retirement, and also to secure men of high scientific attainments, adequate to the demands of one of the most capable observatories of the world. As the above astronomical corps is now full, no appointment under the new statute proposed will be necessary till a vacancy occurs."

Nature states that a meeting will be held in Manchester on February 16th to take into consideration such steps as may seem desirable to assist the executive committee in making the Zoological Congress this year thoroughly successful.

THE Physical Society of Paris has undertaken the supervision of a 'Bibliographica Physica' and has appointed a commission to arrange a method of bibliographical classification. The Physical Society and the Institute of Electrical Engineers, of London, are arranging for the publication of abstracts and papers.

MESSRS. MUNN & Co. have issued a reference catalogue containing a classified index of more than 10,000 articles that have appeared in the *Scientific American Supplement* since its establishment in 1876. The publishers offer to send the catalogue without charge, and it will prove

of value to those who wish to consult any of the large number of valuable scientific articles that have been included in this publication.

UNIVERSITY AND EDUCATIONAL NEWS.

THE British government has expressed itself in favor of a Catholic University for Ireland, though it is not expected that any active steps towards its establishment will be undertaken during the present session of Parliament.

A BILL has been introduced in the lower house of the Prussian Diet giving the Minister of Education power to reprimand or withdraw the licenses of *Privatdozenten*. The bill is evidently intended to give the Government power to regulate the teaching of the lecturers, and has aroused much opposition, a protest against the measure having been signed by one-half of the professors in the University of Berlin.

THE Baldwin locomotive works of Philadelphia has presented the department of mechanical engineering of Columbia University with the locomotive exhibited at the World's Fair valued at about \$12,000. Within the past few months donations of machinery to this department have been made valued at \$60,000.

PROFESSOR LESTER F. WARD will give two courses of lectures, one on pure sociology and one on applied sociology, at the University of West Virginia during the summer quarter.

DR. KARL HÜRTLE has been promoted to a full professorship of physiology at the University of Breslau, and Dr. Anschütz to a full professorship of chemistry at the University of Bonn. Dr. Wiechert has been appointed associate professor of terrestrial magnetism in the University of Göttingen, and Dr. Eugen Meier, of the Polytechnic Institute of Hannover, professor of technical physics in the University of Göttingen.

DISCUSSION AND CORRESPONDENCE.

PRESIDENT MC'KINLEY'S APPOINTMENT OF A FISH COMMISSIONER.

TO THE EDITOR OF SCIENCE: Under the head of 'Scientific Notes and News,' the last number of SCIENCE contains remarks concerning the President of the United States which are unjust, untrue and malicious, and which as an associate